

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

By the foregoing amendment, claims 1-8 have been amended and claim 3 has been canceled. No new matter has been added. Thus, claims 1-2, and 4-8 are currently pending in the application and subject to examination.

In the Office Action mailed April 5, 2006, the Examiner objected to claims 1-7 for informalities. Claims 1-7 have been amended responsive to this objection. Thus, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the objection to claims 1-7.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 5-6, and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,687,784 to Douniwa et al. ("Douniwa"). The Examiner rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Douniwa in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,526,472 to Suzuki ("Suzuki"). The Examiner rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Douniwa in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,964,018 to Masui ("Masui"). The Examiner objected to claim 3 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but asserted that claim 3 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Merely to facilitate allowance, claims 1 and 8 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 3.

The Applicant submits that claims 1 and 8, as amended, are each therefore allowable over the cited art. As amended claims 1 and 8 are allowable, the Applicant submits that claims 2 and 4-7, which depend from claims 1 and 8, are, therefore, also allowable at least for the above noted reasons and for the additional limitations they provide.

CONCLUSION

For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now pending patentability distinguish the present invention from the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into better form, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fee for this extension may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 01-2300. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 01-2300, with reference to Attorney Docket No. 028849-00035

Respectfully submitted,

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